

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the Abstract of the Disclosure with the following rewritten Abstract which appears on a separate sheet.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 3, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--The device according to the present invention can be used for lowering to the seabed of heavy loads (500 tons or more) in relative deep water (for example 1000m). The lifting unit can be connected to and disconnected from the load and includes a large, "soft volume" structure which has an opening to the environment in the lower part and which can be filled with a gas above its opening to add buoyancy. Due to the fact that the chamber of the lifting unit is not a closed pressure module, the construction can be relative simple and can be constructed at low costs as there will be no pressure differences between the inside and the outside of the module. The gas (air) inside the open chamber will compensate the weight of the chamber and the weight of the load to be transported to or from the seabed, at any position during the lowering and raising. Adding gas will ensure a controlled lowering/deployment of the combination of the device and the connected package, for example creating an uplift of 490-500 tons at a load of 500 tons. During the way down, gas (such as for instance air or Nitrogen) needs to be added into the chamber as the gas trapped in it the will be reduced in volume due to the increase of the external water pressure. The combination of lifting device and load sinks due to the resultant small negative buoyancy of the combination, which can be controlled, from the floating barge by a vent system on the module. After depositing the load on the seabed, gas is removed from the chamber via a gas release mechanism to maintain neutral buoyancy or a small

positive buoyancy after disconnecting of the load such that the lifting unit can be retrieved at the water surface.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 13, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Fig 1 shows a floating lowering and lifting device 1 comprising a vessel or barge 2 and a lifting unit 3. Lifting unit 3 comprises a chamber 5 provided with a releasable coupling member 7 carrying a load 8 that is to be raised from or lowered to the seabed. The chamber 5 comprises gas inlet opening 9 which is connected to a gas supply hose 11. The air hose 11 may be wound on an air hose reel 12 and may be attached to gas supply means 13 which may be formed of a compressor or which may be a storage tank comprising gas or compressed gas. A control valve 15 may be included in the air hose 11 for increasing or decreasing the gas supply rate from the tank of compressed air 13. The chamber 5 comprises furthermore a thruster 17 for positioning of the chamber and a controllable gas release valve 21, which may comprise a sonar detector 22 for communicating with sonar transmitter ~~[[23]]~~ 24 for opening or closing of the valve 21. Sonar transmitter ~~[[23]]~~ 24 may be operated from the vessel 2. Furthermore, the chamber 5 comprises equalisation openings 23, 25 in the lower wall 27 of the chamber 5 for equalising the pressure inside the chamber 5 with the ambient pressure. By controlling the valve 15, the gas supply rate to the chamber 5 is adjusted such as to lower the load 8 in a controlled manner at the same time the air hose is wound from the reel 12. For positional purposes and for retrieval of the chamber 5 onto the vessel, the chamber 5 is connected to a guide cable 29 that is connected to a crane 30 on the vessel.--